



The President's Daily Brief

~~Top Secret~~ 17 November 1966



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DAILY BRIEF
17 NOVEMBER 1966

1. North Vietnam

Recent photography shows that the North Vietnamese and Chinese Communists are starting to improve the rail line connecting Hanoi with Kunming, China. (See Map) The line joining Kunming to the main Chinese rail network was only completed in March.

Improvement of the Kunming route is in line with Hanoi's policy of ensuring alternate transport facilities. Up to now, however, the Pinghsiang-Hanoi Railroad has seemingly been handling deliveries from China more than adequately.

2. South Vietnam

Ky is reconsidering the idea of appointing General Quang Minister of Revolutionary Development. Although we know the transfer was seriously proposed, Ky described it as "crazy" when Ambassador Lodge asked about it.

This leaves wide open the problem of how to dispose of Quang without unduly stirring up his southern friends. After the unfortunate effects of removing General Thi from I Corps last March, Ky is moving very cautiously on this one.

3. Communist China

The United States Intelligence Board has approved a Special National Intelligence Estimate on Peking's advanced weapons program. The estimate concludes that the Chinese could have a few 500-1,000 mile missiles deployed in 1967 or 1968 and a few intercontinental missiles by the early 1970's. The intercontinental missile in particular is likely to be crude by our standards and intended primarily as a psychological weapon.

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4. Communist China

As the seesaw struggle for power goes on, some of the more practical-minded leaders around Premier Chou En-lai appear to have gained ground.

Yesterday Peking revealed the promotion of economic planner Li Fu-chun into the "standing committee" of the politburo. This committee contains Mao and the top half-dozen or so leaders and is the key policy-making body.

Li's promotion comes despite recent Red Guard poster attacks on him. Li is considered a Chou man and a reasonably good economist.

5. Jordan

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6. Haiti

Duvalier faces growing unrest and disaffection. Despite his knack for nipping coup plots in the bud--last week he cashiered 23 suspect army officers and sent them fleeing to asylum in various Latin American embassies--rumblings and rumors of new schemes to overthrow him continue to circulate in Port-au-Prince.

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7. Ecuador

The presidential problem has been temporarily swept under the rug with the constituent assembly's election of Otto Arosemena Gomez as provisional president. Otto Arosemena, like his cousin Carlos who was thrown out of the presidency by the military in 1963, is a high living, fifth-of-Scotch-a-day man. Otto is a generally pro-US political moderate, although he does not agree with our economic policies in Latin America.

8. Turkey

Turkish officials suspect last Sunday's riot in Adana--against American airmen who had allegedly molested Turkish girls--may have been organized by the far left Turkish Labor Party.

Tuesday the Turkish foreign minister told Ambassador Hart that there had been advance preparation and that agitators were waiting to whip up a scene when the American airmen came out of a movie. There have been other indications that leftist groups are gearing up for a renewed anti-American campaign.

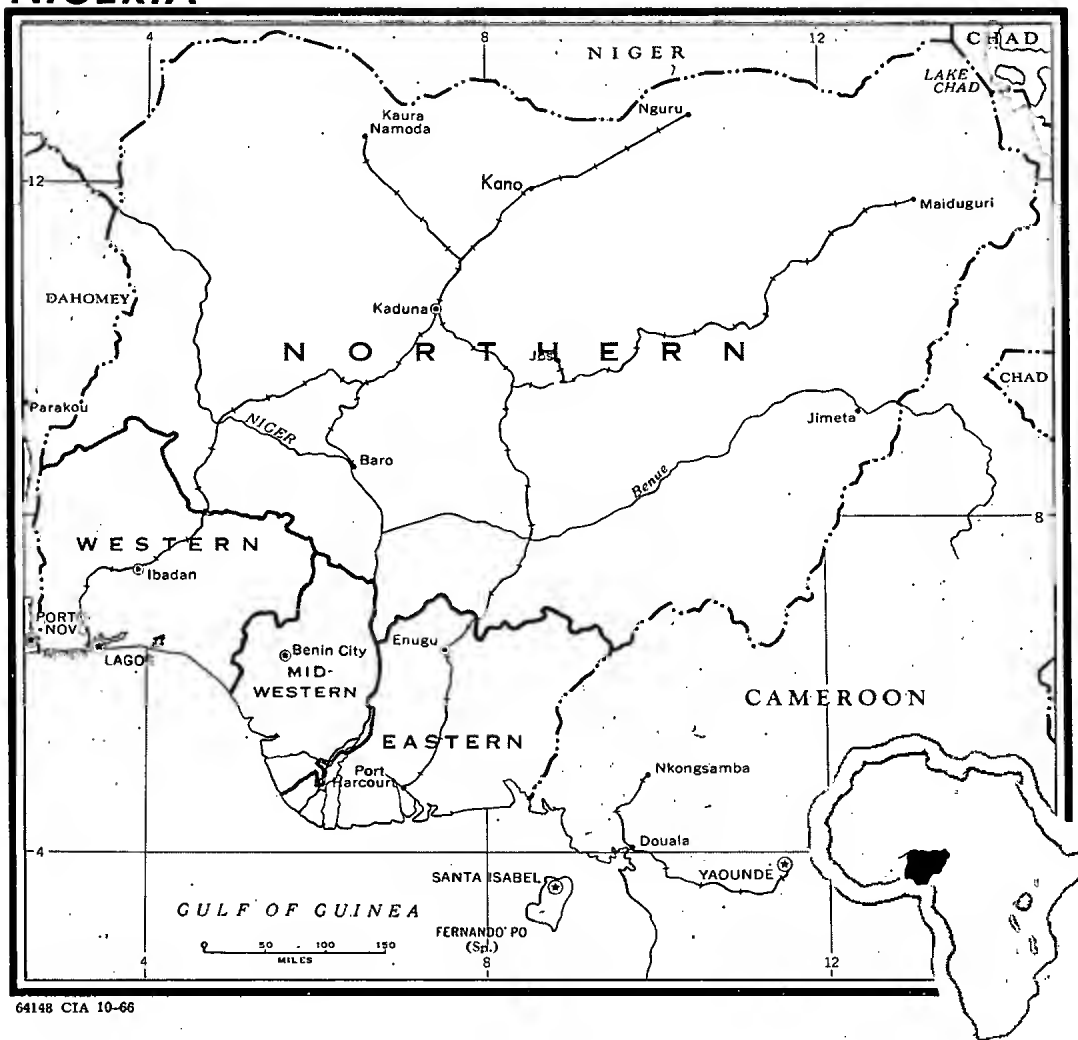
9. India

Newly appointed Home Minister Y. B. Chavan has taken a tough, no nonsense stand on student demonstrations. His first test may come tomorrow if students go through with their plans to march on parliament. Riots by students and other groups have shaken Mrs. Gandhi's government.

10. Nigeria

Efforts to bring the Eastern Region to the conference table have failed, and the interregional talks--scheduled to resume today--have been postponed indefinitely. The situation, in sum, continues to slide downward. A review is at Annex.

NIGERIA



ANNEX

Prospects for Nigeria

CIA has just taken a fresh--and gloomy--look at the Nigerian problem. We believe the situation looks like this:

Nigeria may well be nearing a breakup. The Federation's main political institutions have largely disappeared, formerly important political figures are dead or discredited and practically no one new has come to the scene to take their place. Insofar as federal power exists at all, it is centered in the badly fragmented and undisciplined army, whose troops are mostly from the North. Colonel Gowon, army chief and head of the shattered federal government--himself a northerner--has at most only tenuous control over the military and security forces.

The Eastern Region has already gone some distance toward de facto independence. Its military governor has never recognized Gowon as head of the federal government and the governor now bans the export of foodstuffs from his region. Secessionist sentiment is strong in the East, particularly among the thousands of Ibos who fled because of its massacres in the North. In addition, many easterners think they can go it alone because of their large oil revenues. We expect the drift toward independence to continue, but doubt that actual secession will take place during the next few months.

Gowon and the military, meanwhile, are trying to maintain a united army in some sort of a single country. The problem is that the army is far from united, however. Its leaders may favor a "united" Nigeria only in the abstract, and they are dismayed by the loss of prestige and emoluments which would result from breaking the army into smaller separate parts. In the last analysis, however, the behavior of army officers is usually determined by tribal, regional, or personal ties and prejudices.

ANNEX (Cont'd)

In these circumstances, an attempt to predict the course of events is altogether hazardous. There is an outside chance that some sort of a loose arrangement between the regions will evolve. We think it more likely, however, that there will eventually be a total breakup of the Federation.

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